Extracts from letters from W. L. G. to "Inquirers after Truth," at Derry, N. H., and to Miss Harriet Minot of Haverhill, Mass., 1833.

Boston, March 4, 1833.

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My soul trembles in view of the magnitude of the cause in which I have embarked. I stand, as it were, on an eminence, commanding a sight of Africa, — the Niobe of nations, — and watch the flames of a thousand burning villages fearfully reddening the wide heavens, and hear the shrieks and groans of her enslaved and dying children — and a voice from Heaven cries, — "Plead for the oppressed!" The troublous ocean throws aside its blue curtain, and reveals to my vision an African Golgotha, — the bodies of the dead, men, women and babes, tracking the paths of the slave ships, and numerous as the waves that chant their requiem. A sickly sensation passes over my frame, as if their blood was drenching my garments; and again I hear that voice from Heaven, saying, — "Plead for the oppressed!" The cries of the suffocating victims in the holds of the ships, who, stolen to glut European and American avarice, are destined either to be the prey of sharks, or, what is far worse, to be sold and used for life like cattle, are borne to my ears by every breeze from the ocean; and still I hear that voice from Heaven, saying, — "Plead for the oppressed!" Around me throng the two millions of slaves in this guilty land, — debased, weary, famishing, bleeding and bound, — and they wound my ears with their sighs and shrieks, and melt my heart by their agonizing appeals; and they point to the graves of the millions of their

kindred who have perished in their chains; and I see unborn generations of victims stalking like apparitions before me; and once more I hear that voice from Heaven, saying, in a tone awful and loud, and with increasing earnestness, — "Plead for the oppressed!"

And shall I disobey that voice? If so, will my advisers give me acquital in the day of judgment? If I put out my eyes and stop my ears, and petrify my heart, and become insensible as a marble statue, to please the community, will the community rescue me from the charge of inhumanity, selfishness and cruelty toward my suffering fellow creatures, which will be preferred against me at the bar of God? I am anxious to please the people; but if, in order to do so, I must violate the plainest precepts of the gospel, and disregard the most solemn obligations, will the people see that my name is written in the Book of Life, and that my sins are blotted out of the Book of Remembrance? If they cannot, I must obey the voice from Heaven, whether men will hear or whether they will forbear.

This, then, is the extent of my fanaticism. I mean to perform my duty to God and my fellow men — to love Him supremely, and them as myself.

There does not breathe a human being whom I would injure for worlds. All my enemies I freely pardon, and under the strongest provocations to resentment which they can give me, can use the language of the expiring Son of God --- "Father, forgive them: they know not what they do." As I have said elsewhere: my memory can no more retain the impression of anger, hatred or revenge, than the ocean the track of its monsters. To the slave-holder I address myself in the language of the apostle: "Am I therefore your enemy because I tell you the truth?" He is a robber — a great robber — a robber of God and man — and he should be made to see and feel his guilt, if he be not given over to hardness of heart and blindness of mind. I will not plas-

ter over his conscience with anything like this: "You are very unfortunate ! You cannot do otherwise, at present ! The evil of slavery was entailed upon you ! It would be dangerous and cruel to liberate your slaves now ! How much better they are off than free persons of color ! Do not emancipate until you can send them to Liberia !" &c.,&c. Unfortunate thieves ! Merciful oppressors ! — Sober drunkards ! Religious atheists ! Believing infidels !

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You ask: "How much is it expedient for members of society, uninfluential as ourselves, to think of the subject of slavery?"

Perhaps no truer criterion can be given than this: the golden rule of our Savior. It is my constant endeavor to place myself, in imagination, in the situation of the slaves; and thus I never fail to plead earnestly. We must meditate much, to feel and act properly. The danger is not, I think, that we shall suffer our thoughts to dwell too much upon the cruel slave-system, but that our ardor may expire with the novelty of the subject.

"Uninfluential as ourselves"! Whose influence is so potent as Woman's? Who has a form, an eye, a voice like hers? Whose sceptre is so imperial as her own? Whose benevolent heroism, or moral excellence, or tender sensibility, or deep devotion, is comparable to hers? "Uninfluential"! You have infused new hope and courage into one heart, at least — into my own; and if I exert any influence upon public sentiment, a portion of the merit will hereafter belong to you. Your letters reveal a talent, a spirit, a sympathy, which, if actively exerted, are sufficient to save our country. You may set an example which shall not be powerless beyond the limits of your village: it shall go forth like a universal blessing. The destiny of the slaves is in the hands of the American women, and complete emancipation can never take place without their co-operation. See what the females of Great

Britain have accomplished by uniting together in this labor of love. Many years ago,a distinguished lady in England was so deeply affected in reading Ramsey's View of Slavery in the British Colonies,that she resolved to devote her time, and wealth, and talents, to the abolition of slavery. She soon succeeded in forming among her acquaintance an Anti-Slavery Society; and from that little association has proceeded an influence which has regenerated public sentiment,and to which,undoubtedly,in a great measure,we shall owe the speedy emancipation of eight hundred thousand British slaves. — The ladies of this country may do as much as those of Great Britain have done, in this good cause. Fully comprehending the horrible situation of the female slaves, how can they rest quietly upon their beds at night,or feel indifferent to the deliverance of those in bonds? Oh,if the shrieks could reach our ears which are constantly rising to heaven from the bosom of some bleeding wife or ruined daughter at the South,we should shudder and turn pale,and make new resolutions to seek their deliverance. Women of New England — mothers and daughters ! if I fail to awake your sympathies, and secure your aid,I may well despair of gaining the hearts and support of men. If my heart bleeds over the degraded and insufferable condition of a large portion of your sex,how ought you,whose sensibility is more susceptible than the wind-harp,to weep,and speak, and act,in their behalf?

"Shall we behold,unheeding,
Life's holiest feelings crushed?
When woman's heart is bleeding,
Shall woman's voice be hushed?

Oh, by every blessing,
That Heaven to thee may lend,

Forget not their oppression ---

Remember, sister, friend !"

No — no ! you will not, must not, cannot forget. But then you fear lest this cause may exclude other good objects from your attention. It may, indeed, to some extent, but not culpably so. My interest in the cause of Temperance, Peace, Missions, &c., &c., suffers no abatement from my devotion to the cause of emancipation: on the contrary, it rises daily in all the moral enterprises of the age. It is true, I cannot give them all the same attention and assistance — nor does duty require such a division of my time and energy — but I can do something for them all. Besides, all of them, except the anti-slavery cause, are supported by a powerful host: hence we may be permitted to labor chiefly for the promotion of that one cause. Am I right? In reference to the absorbing interest which you feel in this cause, you say, "Tell us, then, how we may prevent the supremacy of these feelings." No, indeed, ladies, I would not, on any account, put down that supremacy.

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You excite my curiosity and interest still more, by informing me that my dearly beloved Whittier is a friend and townsman of yours. Can we not induce him to devote his brilliant genius more to the advancement of our cause, and kindred enterprises, and less to the creations of romance and fancy, and the disturbing incidents of political strife?

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The worthy pastor who says that distributing the Liberator in the southern states is like throwing fire-brands into a magazine of powder, should remember that truth is revolutionary in its tendency. Does he never inflame the minds of sinners by his faithful admonitions? What incendiaries were

the apostles ! So cut to the heart were the guilty Jews by the preaching of Stephen, that "they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, and cast him out of the city, and stoned him." It is my object to blow the slave system into fragments, that upon its ruins may be erected a splendid edifice of Freedom.

(To Miss Harriet Plummer, P.O. address, Derry, N.H.)
To my unknown friends —
"Inquirers after Truth."

Boston, March 18, 1833.

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You think my influence will prevail with my dear Whittier more than yours. I think otherwise. If he has not already blotted my name from the tablet of his memory, it is because his magnanimity is superior to neglect. We have had no correspondence whatever, for more than a year, with each other ! Does this look like friendship between us? And yet I take the blame all to myself. He is not a debtor to me — I owe him many letters. My only excuse is, an almost unconquerable aversion to pen, ink and paper, (as well he knows,) and the numerous obligations which rest upon me, growing out of my connection with the cause of emancipation. Pray secure his forgiveness, and tell him that my love to him is as strong as was that of David to Jonathan. Soon I hope to send him a contrite epistle; and I know he will return a generous pardon.

(To Miss Harriet Plummer,

Haverhill, Mass.)

To "Inquirers after Truth."

Boston, March 19, 1833.

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In the course of a few weeks, I expect to leave my native land on an important mission to England, in behalf of the great and glorious cause of African emancipation. This mission will occupy six months, perhaps a year. What my reception will be in that country, — should I be wafted safely across the deep, — I cannot doubt. There, I shall breathe freely — there, my sentiments and language on the subject of slavery, will receive the acclamations of the people — there, my spirit will be elevated and strengthened in the presence of Clarkson, and Wilberforce, and Brougham, and Buxton, and O'Connell, and their noble coadjutors — there, I can tell the story of the black man's wrongs, in this land of liberty and light, to hearts that will melt with pity, and devise liberally for his rescue — there, I shall doubtless be permitted to address those of your own sex who are animated with a zeal for the overthrow of slavery which many waters cannot quench. Delightful anticipation !

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A thought has just occurred to me. Suppose I should visit Haverhill, previous to my departure for England: is it probable that I could obtain a meeting-house, in which to address the inhabitants on the subject of slavery? - (Probably I should deem it expedient to say nothing derogatory to the Colonization Society.) If I can be sure of a house, I will try to come Sabbath after next. I will consult my friend Whittier, and see what can be done.

(To

Miss Harriet Minot,

Haverhill, Mass.)

Boston, March 26, 1833.

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I have written to Whittier respecting my visit to Haverhill, but have heard nothing from him. Nevertheless, I shall visit your beautiful village on Saturday next, even should no arrangements be made for the delivery of an address.

[To the same.]

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Boston, April 3, 1833.

Although it is midnight, and in a few hours I expect to bid adieu to Boston, yet I cannot consent to woo "Tired Nature's sweet restorer, balmy sleep," until I express to you — very imperfectly, indeed — the pleasure which I received from my recent visit to Havernill. Beautiful village ! it has almost stolen my heart. Already do I sigh at the separation, like a faithful lover absent from the mistress of his affections. Must months elapse ere I again behold it? The thought is grievous.

During my brief sojourn in H., my spirit was as elastic as the breeze, and, like the lark, soared steadily upward to the gate of heaven, carolling its notes of joy. How invigorating was the atmosphere ! how bright the sun ! how cheerful each field and hill ! how magnificent the landscape ! What have I not lost by a residence in this "populous solitude,"— this city of bustle, dust and bricks !

But, pleasant as it is to behold the face of Nature, it has no beauty like the countenance of a beloved friend. Sweet is the song of birds, but sweeter the voices of those we love. To see my dear Whittier, once more,

full of health and manly beauty, was pleasurable indeed. Other friends I saw whom I esteem and admire. Could I, then, but enjoy my visit?

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(To Miss Harriet Minot,

Haverhill, Mass.)

Hartford, April 9, 1833.

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Since I left Haverhill, an ocean of conflicting emotions has been dashing upon the shore of my affections — emotions of gratitude and regret. On Tuesday evening last, I bade farewell to my colored friends of Boston, in a public address, and on Friday evening to the people of color in Providence. On both occasions, the highest interest and most intense feeling were felt and exhibited by the audience. They wept freely-they clustered around me in throngs, each one eager to receive the pressure of my hand and implore Heaven's choicest blessings upon my head. You cannot imagine the scene, and my pen is wholly inadequate to describe it. As I stood before them, and reflected it might be the last time I should behold them together on earth, — the last time I should be permitted to administer advice and consolation to their minds, — the last time I should have an opportunity to pour out my gratitude before them for the numerous manifestations of their confidence in my integrity, and appreciation of my humble services in their cause, — I could not but feel a strong depression of mind. The separation of friends, — especially if it is to be a long and hazardous one, — is a painful event indeed. ****** But a separation like that, was to me, and I believe to the people of color themselves, one of no ordinary occurrence. Their condition has long

attracted my attention, secured my efforts, and awakened in my bosom a flame of sympathy, which neither the winds nor waves of opposition can ever extinguish. It is the lowness of their estate, in the estimation of the world, which exalts them in my eyes. It is the distance which separates them from the blessings and privileges of society, which brings them so closely to my affections. It is the unmerited scorn, reproach and persecution of their persons, by those whose complexion is colored like my own, that command for them my sympathy and respect. It is the fewness of their friends and the great number of their enemies, that induce me to stand forth in their defence, and enables me, I trust, to exhibit to the world the purity of my motives.

On their part, do I not know how deep and intense is their affection for me? Have they not multiplied, as individuals and as societies, their expressions and tokens of regard, until my obligations assume a mountainous height? Have I more steadfast and grateful friends, in this hostile world, than themselves? Not that I deserve so much at their hands — not that the value of my labors bears any proportion to the rich recompense of their unbounded confidence and love — not that I am qualified in all things to instruct them; — yet they have shown, in a thousand ways, that the course I have pursued has secured their entire approbation — that the language I have uttered has been the language of their own hearts; — that the advice I have given has been treasured up in their hearts, like good seed sown in good ground, and is now producing fruit, ten, thirty, sixty, and even a hundred fold.

Why should my parting from them be an occasion of sadness? I go, not to escape from toil, but to labor more abundantly in their cause. If I may do something for their good at home, I hope to do more abroad. Is not the heaven over their heads, which has so long been clothed in sackcloth, beginning to disclose its starry principalities, and illumine their pathway? Is

not the storm, which has been so long pouring its rage upon their heads, breaking away, and a bow of promise, as glorious as that which succeeded the ancient deluge, spanning the sky, — a token that, to the end of time, the billows of prejudice and oppression shall no more cover the earth, to the destruction of their race? Is not their cause ripening like the spring? Theirs has been a long and rigorous winter. The chill of indifference and contempt, the frost of adversity, the blast of persecution, the storm of oppression — all have been theirs. There was no sustenance to be found — no prospect to delight the eye, or inspire the drooping heart — no golden ray to dissipate the gloom. But now — thanks be to God! that dreary winter is rapidly hastening to a close. The sun of humanity is going steadily up, from the horizon to its zenith, growing larger and brighter, and melting the frozen earth beneath its powerful rays. The genial showers of repentance are softly falling upon the barren plain — the wilderness begins to bud and blossom like the rose — the voice of joy succeeds the notes of woe; and hope, like the lark, is soaring upwards, and warbling hymns at the gate of Heaven. And this is only the out-bursting of spring. What shall be the summer and autumn? This is but the twilight, "the dim dawn" of day: What shall be the brightness of the day itself? These are but a few drops of mercy; What shall be the full shower — the rolling tide? These are but crumbs of comfort, to prevent the needy wholly from perishing; What shall be the bountiful table?

On Sabbath evening, I delivered an address to a large and attentive audience of white people in Brooklyn, where I have long been regarded as a terrible monster. I am happy to learn that the effects of the address are most salutary.

This evening I bid farewell to the colored inhabitants of Hartford, in their meeting-house.

To-morrow, I start for New Haven, in which place I shall stay two or three days, in order to have my portrait taken and engraved upon steel. This I do, reluctantly; but my friends are imperious, and I must gratify them. This sticking up one's face in print-shops, to be the "observed of all observers," is hardly consistent with genuine modesty, but I can in no other way get rid of the importunities of those who would pluck out their eyes to give me.

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(To Miss Harriet Minot,
Haverhill, Mass.)

Philadelphia, April 22, 1833.

On Friday afternoon I arrived in New York from this city, and had the pleasure of receiving your favor of the 9th inst. I was immediately told that the enemies of the abolition cause had formed a conspiracy to seize my body by legal writs on some false pretences, with the sole intention to convey me South, and deliver me up to the authorities of Georgia — or, in other words, to abduct and destroy me. The agent, who was to carry this murderous design into operation, had been in New York several days, waiting my appearance. As a packet was to sail the next day for Liverpool from Philadelphia, my friends advised me to start early the next morning for this city, in the steam-boat, hoping I might arrive in season to take passage therein, and thus baffle the vigilance of the enemy — but the ship sailed in the morning, and I did not get here till the afternoon — consequently, I failed to accomplish my purpose. My only alternative, therefore, is to return again to New York to-morrow evening, and stealthily get away, if possible, in the Liverpool packet that sails the next

morning. Probably I shall not start in the ship, but go down the river in a pilot boat, and overtake her.

My friends are full of apprehension and disquietude, but I cannot know fear. I feel that it is impossible for danger to owe me. I tremble at nothing but my own delinquencies, as one who is bound to be perfect, even as my heavenly Father is perfect.

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(To Miss Harriet Minot,
Derry, N.H., -- forwarded
to Haverhill, Mass.)

Below the Harbor of New York,
May 1, 1833.

I am now fairly embarked for Liverpool, on board the ship Hibernia, Capt. Maxwell. We lie about ten miles below the city, at anchor, and here we must remain twenty-four hours. * * * *

Since the transmission of my last letter, I have been journeying from place to place, rather for the purpose of defeating the designs of my enemies than from choice. I expected to have sailed in the packet of the 24th ult., but applied too late, as every berth had been previously engaged. I do not now regret the detention, as it enabled the artist at New Haven to complete my portrait; and I think he has succeeded in making a very tolerable likeness. To be sure, those who imagine that I am a monster, on seeing it will doubt or deny its accuracy, seeing no horns about the head; but my friends, I think, will recognize it easily.

This, then, is May Day ! How happy I should be were I in the woods, singing like the birds (as most assuredly I should be singing, were I there,) and roaming free as the air of heaven. * * * * * * How can one help singing? I do not mean by this that all must be familiar with the science of music, — but how natural it is to sing ! My friend Whittier must not see this little rhapsody, else he will be very severe upon me. But then I can retort upon him. A strange creature is he who really prefers the quack of a duck, or the scream of a goose, to the song of a robin !

Last evening I had a large audience of colored persons in the Methodist African Church in New York, who came to hear my farewell address. Alas ! that the value of my labors in their behalf bears so small a proportion to their unbounded gratitude and love. Mr. Finley, the General Agent of the Colonization Society, was present, and witnessed a tremendous assault upon his darling scheme.

(To Miss Harriet Minot,

Haverhill, Mass.)
